

# STATE OF ALASKA

## THE LEGISLATURE

2019

Source

HJR 14

Legislative  
Resolve No.

4



Urging the Alaska Congressional delegation to pursue infrastructure funding for a deep draft Arctic port in Nome; requesting the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to send a letter from the state to the Alaska Congressional delegation supporting a deep draft Arctic port in Nome; and requesting the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to work collaboratively with the City of Nome on a deep draft Arctic port in Nome.

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### BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

**WHEREAS** Alaska is the only state in the United States that borders the Arctic Ocean; and

**WHEREAS** the retreat of Arctic sea ice is increasing the seasonal navigability of the Arctic Ocean, which has resulted in an influx of marine traffic in the circumpolar Arctic; and

**WHEREAS** the other seven Arctic nations have been very proactive in addressing the changing situation in the Arctic and have begun to assert their interest in the region; and

**WHEREAS** the United States Army Corps of Engineers launched the Alaska Deep-

Draft Arctic Port System study in 2012 to evaluate potential locations for a deep draft Arctic port on the northern and western coasts of the state and determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements as part of a large system of port facilities in the Arctic and subarctic regions; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2015, the United States Army Corps of Engineers released a draft feasibility report and environmental assessment that selected the Port of Nome as the preferred site to establish a deep draft Arctic port; and

**WHEREAS** the state, the Alaska State Legislature, and the Arctic Policy Commission realize that access to newly open Arctic waterways is vitally important to the state; and

**WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature appropriated \$1,600,000 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, and \$1,600,000 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, to fund the City of Nome's 50/50 match requirement for the United States Army Corps of Engineers feasibility and design studies; and

**WHEREAS** the first year of the accelerated two-year study is almost complete, and the selection of a preferred project design alternative is scheduled for March 2019; and

**WHEREAS** the timeline for developing a deep draft Arctic port is fairly short, with construction potentially beginning in 2023 or 2024 if the project is authorized by Congress in 2020; and

**WHEREAS** the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the urgency of developing key infrastructure and defense capabilities in the Arctic;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Alaska Congressional delegation to pursue all infrastructure funding that recognizes the region's importance in addressing the nation's critical security concerns, vital energy supply, and significant opportunities to decrease intercontinental shipping distances; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to send a letter from the state to the Alaska Congressional delegation supporting a deep draft Arctic port in Nome; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to work collaboratively with the City of Nome to provide technical support through the completion of the feasibility and design phases of establishing a deep draft Arctic port and assist the City of Nome in developing innovative

funding strategies for the city's construction cost share.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.